

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 01554 141417Z

44

ACTION PER-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 /015 W

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R 101710Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2698

UNCLAS ALGIERS 1554

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, AG

SUBJ: CONSULAR COMMISSION FOR AMCONSUL ORAN, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

1. IN VIEW OF GREATLY INCREASED CONSULAR WORKLOAD AT AMCONSUL ORAN, WE BELIEVE THAT CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, MRS. CHRISTINA COLBERT, AND ALL FUTURE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS SHOULD BE ACCORDED VICE CONSULAR COMMISSIONS FOR PERIOD OF ASSIGNMENT IN ORAN.

2. AS DEPT IS AWARE, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AT AMCONSUL ORAN HAD VICE CONSULAR COMMISSIONS FROM OPENING OF POST UNTIL 1967 AT WHICH TIME POST'S PERSONNEL WAS CONSOLIDATED TO THAT OF WORKING COUPLE. GIVEN LIMITED NUMBER OF AMERICANS RESIDENT IN ALGERIA AND RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF AMERICANS TRAVELING TO THE U.S. IN FIRST YEARS FOLLOWING BREAK IN RELATIONS, FACT THAT ONLY ONE OF TWO AMERICAN OFFICIALS AT POST HAD CONSULAR AUTHORITY AND HENCE OFFICIAL STANDING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES WAS NOT SERIOUS PROBLEM.

3. SITUATION HAS, HOWEVER, CHANGED DRAMATICALLY IN PAST FEW YEARS: ALGERIA POST REPORT FOR 1969 STATED THERE WERE FIFTY AMERICANS IN DISTRICT'S FIVE DEPARTMENTS; CONSULAR DISTRICT NOW COMPOSED OF TEN DEPARTMENTS AND HAS MORE THAN EIGHT HUNDRED RESIDENT AMERICANS-A NUMBER WHICH SEEMS CERTAIN TO CLIMB TO OVER ONE THOUSAND BY NEXT YEAR. AMCONSUL ORAN HAS HAD CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN ITS CONSULAR WORKLOAD. WHILE POST DID ONLY TWENTY-FOUR NOTARIALS IN FY-71, TWO HUNDRED FORTY WERE PERFORMED IN FY-74. ISSUING ONLY 24 NIVS

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IN FY-71, AMCONSUL ORAN ISSUED 203 IN FY-75.

4. BIWEEKLY COURIER TRIPS TO ALGIERS, VISITS TO AMERICANS IMPRISONED SOME THREE HOURS FROM ORAN, AND OFFICIAL TRAVEL THROUGHOUT DISTRICT MAKE IT LIKELY THAT CONSUL WILL ONE DAY BE ABSENT FROM CONSULATE AT TIME OF EMERGENCY, FOR EXAMPLE WHEN HIS INTERVENTION IS REQUIRED TO SECURE WAIVER OF ALGERIAN EXIT VISA FOR MEDICAL EVACUATION. MOREOVER, FOREIGN VISA APPLICANTS AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, MEMBERS OF AMERICAN COMMUNITY ARE ALREADY AT TIMES INCONVENIENCED BY BEING UNABLE TO OBTAIN ROUTINE CONSULAR SERVICES DURING ABSENCE OF CONSUL. CONVERSELY, CONSUL HAS OFTEN HAD TO POSTPONE TRIPS AND OTHER OFFICIAL DUTIES DUE TO PRESS OF CONSULAR BUSINESS.

5. RESTORING VICE CONSULAR STATUS TO AMCONSULATE ORAN'S ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT WOULD ENSURE BETTER SERVICE TO PUBLIC AND HAVE ADDED ADVANTAGE OF PERMITTING CONSUL GREAT DEAL MORE FLEXIBILITY IN ARRANGING HIS OWN SCHEDULE TO MEET VARIOUS RESPONSIBILITIES OF POSITION.

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ALGIER01554
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750242-0977
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750766/aaaachda.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PER
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAY 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <10 MAR 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSULAR COMMISSION FOR AMCONSUL ORAN, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
TAGS: CGEN, AG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006